

FURTHER FACETS OF INDRIDI INDRIDASON'S MEDIUMSHIP, INCLUDING 'TRANSCENDENTAL' MUSIC, DIRECT SPEECH, XENOGLOSSY AND LIGHT PHENOMENA

by ERLENDUR HARALDSSON

ABSTRACT

The Experimental Society kept a protocol of most séances with Indridi Indridason in the form of Minute Books. They had been lost for over half a century when two of them were rediscovered recently, along with additional pages. This paper describes some phenomena that were not dealt with in the 1989 *SPR Proceedings* by Gissurarson and Haraldsson, or that can be described more fully after examination of the Minute Books. An earlier paper (Haraldsson, 2011) dealt with one particular case in Indridason's mediumship, namely the description of the fire in Copenhagen and the identity of the trance-personality Emil Jensen. The present paper reveals in greater detail how the séances were conducted and deals with the main trance-personalities of Indridason's mediumship, and the phenomena with which each of them was particularly involved. Particular attention is paid to reports of 'transcendental' music, foreign direct communicators, including voices of two professional singers (one male and one female) who sang loudly at the same time, and cases of xenoglossy and direct speech. This paper also reports on checks carried out into claimed memories, the reported 'disappearance' of the medium's left arm, light phenomena, the appearance of Emil Jensen in a pillar of light, and the appearance of a monster-like animal. Contemporary criticism of Indridason's mediumship is reviewed and conclusions drawn as to the relevance of his remarkable phenomena to the question of survival.

INTRODUCTION

Indridi Indridason (1883–1912) was in 1904 the first medium to appear in Iceland, and he was investigated by prominent academics until 1909, when he fell seriously ill and died three years later at the young age of 28 years. The Experimental Society was formed for the sole purpose of investigating his phenomena. Further biographical details are given in Haraldsson (2011) and Gissurarson and Haraldsson (1989). The purpose of the present paper is to provide further new details concerning Indridason's trance-personalities and the various phenomena that were associated with each of them, including 'transcendental' music, direct speech, xenoglossy and light phenomena.

The mediumship of Indridi Indridason started with violent table-movements. Then, Kvaran (1934) writes, "Indridi started automatic writing. After a while it was written, 'Now Indridi shall fall into trance'. He fell into trance, which none of us had ever seen before." First there appeared an unidentified female entity who expressed a fear that unwelcome forces might take control of Indridi. Indridi had spells of fear, speaking of seeing shadowy entities that he was afraid of, and addressing them in abusive language. After a short period Konrad Gislason, the brother of Indridi's grandfather, took over as control. Kvaran reports that Gislason "could soon speak through his lips when the medium was in trance". Progress was slow, the medium was at times ill-tempered, and showed perverseness towards the invisible guests that were using him. In this

period he was a reluctant medium. He felt very tired after the séances, complained of headaches and slept poorly. In the early summer of 1905 the group was about to give up.

In November 1905 things started again informally at the home of one of Indridi's friends. There was a change for the better; raps and loud bangs on the walls were heard, often on demand and in response to questions, and clicks in the air. Light phenomena started taking various forms and different colours. Soon direct voices were heard, either those of the controls or of other communicators, who spoke outside the medium, in his close vicinity or some distance away from him (direct speech). This is reported from the first Minute Book onwards.



Indridi Indridason (1883–1912) with an unidentified person standing at his side.

CONTROLS AND COMMUNICATORS

At the end of each séance, or the next morning, members of the Experimental Society described in the Minute Books what had occurred at each séance. These Minute Books had been lost for over half a century when two of them with some additional pages were rediscovered recently. They contain slightly over three hundred handwritten pages and reveal in greater detail than was known before how the séances were conducted and what occurred. This paper describes some new findings that were not dealt with in the 1989 *Proceedings* report by Gissurarson and Haraldsson, or that can now be described more fully after examination of the Minute Books.

As with most trance mediums, there appeared various communicators (trance personalities) in Indridi's mediumship, some of them frequently and at almost every sitting. These were his controls. Other communicators appeared only once or a few times. The controls were seen as the organisers of his mediumship and stood in close contact with the leaders of the Experimental Society, such as the prominent writer and editor Einar Kvaran and the theology professor Haraldur Nielsson. These contacts between the leaders of the Society and the controls were made either verbally through the medium in trance or sometimes by automatic writing. This is how it was determined what kinds of phenomena and communications would be attempted. These attempts seemed particularly proof-oriented and to be directed to producing a variety of different phenomena. The genuineness of Indridi's trance was tested time and again by pricking him with pins on sensitive areas of his body. There was no reaction: he was in deep trance.

The Minute Books reveal that in 15 séances during the period from 4th December 1905 to 26th January 1906 eleven control communicators appeared: Konrad Gislason (1808–1881) at every séance; Revd Steinn Steinsen (1838–

1883) at fourteen; and Jensen at six; three trance-personalities appeared two or three times, among them one who spoke Dutch; four appeared only once, and 'disturbing entities' are mentioned a few times without further description. All the séances started with prayer and the singing of psalms. Kvaran states that in the beginning the sitters did not plan or want such religious involvement, which developed at the request of the controls. Some of the singing was led by the deceased Revd Steinn Steinsen, sometimes singing 'outside', as it was described in the Minute Books.¹

Two years later, in another sample of 15 séances in the second Minute Book, covering the period from September 1907 to February 1908, there appeared on average nine communicators per séance. Konrad Gislason was at every séance, as was Sigmundur Gudmundsson (1838–1897); Revd Steinn Steinsen appeared eight times. There were two foreigners: a Norwegian doctor, Danielsen, who was present at almost every sitting and had become one of the controls, and a French lady with a magnificent soprano voice. Jensen was still with them and appeared three times in these 15 séances. The controls had a variety of backgrounds and the prominence of each of them at the séances changed somewhat over time, perhaps because of the particular phenomena that were being produced at that time. It is reported in the Minute Books that the foreign controls spoke in their native languages, which the medium did not know. Let us now examine in greater detail what was revealed regarding the identity of the foreign controls and communicators, and the evidence for their alleged xenoglossy.

THE FRENCH SINGER AND 'MUSICA TRASCENDENTALE'

Two foreign communicators were particularly frequent: a French lady who was a singer, and a Norwegian doctor. The French lady sang rather frequently, spoke sometimes in French, and tried also to speak in English and German. Few Icelanders spoke French in those days but there was much interest in testing her French. On 17th September 1907 the Minutes relate that the French-speaking G. T. Zoega took part in a séance. He addressed the singer in French and "apprehends that she understands him. He hears clearly French words and sentences in her speech though he could not hear whole sentences."

On 25th September the French lady "speaks to Thor Gudmundsson, who hears French words and sentences, and besides, he observes that she understands him, although he speaks French". On 13th January, "the French lady sings a little. Thor Gudmundsson and E.H. (Kvaran) converse with her, both in French and English, and check carefully that she understands both languages. She then tries to repeat a few Icelandic words." This description indicates responsive xenoglossy (Stevenson, 1984).

The French lady had a magnificent soprano voice and sang frequently at sittings, sometimes faintly, sometimes strongly, and on some occasions a duet with a powerful male bass voice. She sang frequently as a direct voice outside the medium. More on her singing can be found in Gissurarson and Haraldsson (1989).

¹ 'Outside' means that the singing was heard coming not from the throat of the medium but from somewhere in the séance room outside of him.

The Minutes that have been preserved reveal nothing about her identity, only that she was a French singer. The organist Brynjolfur Thorlaksson (1867–1950) describes an incident which is not mentioned in the Gissurarson and Haraldsson (1989) report that in his view throws light on her identity:—

At a meeting of the inner circle we heard a male voice speak French outside the medium that we had never heard before. It seemed that his words were not directed at us but to someone on the other side. At the same time we heard some other voices outside the medium, but rather unclearly. We did, though, discern among them the voice of the French singer and heard her suddenly scream in distress. It seemed as if there had been an uproar or disagreement of some kind. We did not distinguish individual words except at one time a male voice said “Madame Malibran”.

We asked the control what had happened. The answer was that the man, who had used the name to address the woman, was Malibran, and he had been the husband of the French singer, who had also been there. They had not seen each other since they ‘went over’ [died]. He had learnt about her whereabouts and had come to the meeting in order to get her to go with him, but she had refused. That was the cause of the uproar. More we were not told.

None of us present had the faintest idea about ‘Madame Malibran’ and her husband. Next day some of us looked for the name in some encyclopaedias. Unexpectedly, we found that in America there had been a wealthy French planter by the name of Malibran. He had married the singer Maria Felicia, of Spanish descent, who was born in Paris in 1808 and died in Manchester in 1836. He had become bankrupt three months after they married; she had divorced him and returned to Europe.

[Thordarson, 1942, pp. 79–81]

Brynjolfur adds that none of them had the faintest idea about this Malibran nor did they expect Indridi to have. Nevertheless, they found out that a certain Maria Felicia had indeed been a celebrated mezzo-soprano singer who sang leading roles in opera houses in Paris, Naples, London and New York. She was born in Paris of Spanish parents—her father was one of Rossini’s favourite tenors and she trained as a singer from an early age. While in New York—it is reported — she hastily married Francois



Brynjolfur Thorlaksson (1867–1950) was organist at the Reykjavik Cathedral. He became a friend of Indridi Indridason and attended numerous seances. His vivid reminiscences were recorded by Thordarson.



The ‘French singer’, a trance-personality with a magnificent soprano voice, was believed to have been the celebrated opera singer, Maria Felicia Malibran (1808–1836).

Eugène Malibran, a man 28 years her senior, whom she left a year later. She died in Manchester in 1836. Biographies (e.g. Bushnell, 1979) have been written about her because she was considered to be one of the greatest opera singers of the 19th century.

There is no obvious way for us to verify anything regarding the French singer. It seems odd that Mr Malibran was looking for his former wife, who had died more than seventy years earlier. According to Bushnell's biography of Maria Felicia, Francois Eugène Malibran was born in Paris in 1781 of a French father and Spanish mother. He died in 1836, the same year as Maria Felicia.

The Minutes report an interesting incident after a séance on 25th September 1907. Some sitters used the trance-personality of the French singer to test ingeniously the accuracy of Indridi's statements about the movements of deceased persons he claimed to see. It gives further evidence of xenoglossy taking place at Indridason's séances:—

After the meeting, I.I. (Indridi), Brynjólfur Thorlaksson and Thorarinn Th. Gudmundsson went to the Hotel Iceland, where they drank a cup of chocolate, etc. There they met Brynjólfur's brother, Thorkell, who joined them. From there they all went up to the Experimental House. Brynjólfur played a few tunes on the harmonium and they chatted for a while. Then one of them suggested that they go into the smaller hall to see if anything happened.

They sat down on the bench in the first row. As soon as they had sat down the curtains to the cabinet were drawn so that all could hear. Indridi sat on the left side of Brynjólfur, who held both his hands and placed his leg around his legs. Thorarinn sat on Brynjólfur's right-hand side and held his arm, and Thorkell sat next to Thorarinn. Next Brynjólfur requested that the curtains be moved again, and they were drawn back and forth a few times. As this happened Indridi said that he saw the Norwegian doctor standing between the curtains. A little later he said that he saw the French singer standing between the cabinet and a nearby chimney.

Then it occurred to them to ask Thorarinn to address her in French and get her to do something that the rest of them, who did not understand French, did not know about. He did that. Then Indridi said: "Now she bows down."

Then Thorarinn said: "This is correct. This is what I asked her to do." Thorarinn spoke to her again. Then the medium said: "Now she is walking towards us, and she had almost reached us when she suddenly turned around and walked towards the Norwegian doctor in the cabinet, as if he was calling her."

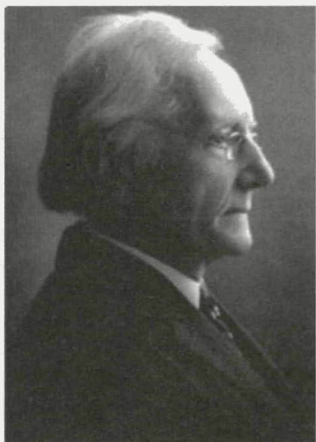
Thorarinn responded: "This is not quite as I asked her, because I asked her to walk behind us." But as this happened the medium saw Sigmund standing right behind us.

Now they heard a chair or a table thrown onto the floor just inside the door or in the cabinet . . . (violent movements, etc. followed).

Brynjólfur also describes this incident in his memoirs, and adds that "Thorarinn was convinced that no deception had taken place either by Indridi or by anyone else. He spent the night as Indridi's guest and they talked into the night." (Thordarson, 1942, pp. 73–78).

What perhaps impressed the sitters most about the French lady was when, with her magnificent soprano voice, she sang a duet with a powerful male voice. Sometimes she was heard joining the sitters when they sang a hymn at the beginning of their meetings. On 14th September 1907 she and the composer Sveinbjörn Sveinbjörnsson² sang together *O sanctissima*. She sang 'outside'.

² Sveinbjörn Sveinbjörnsson lived much of his life in Edinburgh as a music teacher and composer of



The Icelandic composer Sveinbjörn Sveinbjörnsson (1847–1926). The Minutes of the Experimental Society describe some interesting communications between him and fellow-composer Edvard Grieg.

The deceased Revd Steinn Steinsen often led the singing at the beginning or early in the séances, and she often sang with him. Another example of two 'otherworldly' voices singing outside at the same time occurred on 3rd October 1907: Konrad Gislason asked for music to be played (on the organ), then "they heard singing by voices of invisible beings, such as the French singer and others". It seems that the French singer was sometimes keen to sing at Indridason's séances, for on 23rd January 1908 it is recorded in the Minute Book that "the French singer asked for permission to sing but was not allowed to do so" (presumably by the chief controls).

Sometimes a choir was heard singing as if far away. The vigorously and healthily sceptical Hannesson reports that, at the beginning of a séance on 8th June 1909, the sitters were singing a hymn with the accompaniment of the organ, when "an extra *female voice* was heard". On 11th June "while music was being played so that the medium would fall deeper in trance, there sang (outside) first a bright female voice . . . and then a strong male voice." Once, for a short while, S.Br. and Hannesson heard them "sing at the same time . . . Both voices were heard very close to me." (Hannesson, 1924a, pp.217 and 223). This phenomenon was not restricted to the séance room. Indridi sang sometimes in the Cathedral choir, and Brynjolfur, who was a music teacher as well as an organist in Reykjavik Cathedral, reported: "I as well as the rest of the choir sometimes heard strange voices singing with them. Some of the audience also heard this. Once, one of churchgoers said to me after the service: 'You were not quite alone today; there were more than the choir singing.'" (Thordarson, 1942, p.89). Another incident is reported by Brynjolfur (Thordarson, 1942, p.88):—

Once in the middle of the day, as so often, Indridi was at my home. While he was there I played on the organ a melody by Chopin. Indridi sat to the left of the organ. I expected that Mrs Malibran knew the melody that I was playing, for I heard her humming it outside Indridi. Then I saw him falling into trance . . . Then I heard many voices, both of men and women, singing behind me, but especially to my right with Indridi being on my left. I did not distinguish individual words, but the voices I heard clearly, both upper and lower voices, and they all sang the melody that I was playing.

This singing differed from ordinary singing as it sounded more like a sweet echo. It seemed to come from afar, but was at the same time close to me. No single voice was discernible except the voice of Malibran. I always heard her as separate.

Direct voices are known in the literature, such as with the mediums D. D. Home (Dunraven, 1924) and Emily French (Randall, 2010). However, singing and music are rare. Indridi is perhaps the most outstanding medium, with direct singing of many voices. A few such cases are reported from the early

chamber music and folk songs. He is best known as the composer of the Icelandic national anthem.

history of spiritualism. One example is described in a letter written by Charles Partridge about 'the spirit room' of Jonathan Koons in Ohio (Coleman, 1861):—

I attended three public circles (open without charge to all comers) in the spirit-house of Mr Koons—a house or room a little distance from his residence, built expressly for the purpose. The presiding spirit is an Indian named John King . . . After the circle is formed the door and windows are shut, and the light extinguished. Instantaneously a tremendous blow was struck upon the table by a large drumstick, and immediately the bass and tenor drums were beaten rapidly, like the roll-call on the muster field, making through the hills a thousand echoes. This continued for five minutes or more and, when ended, King saluted us through the trumpet, and in an audible voice . . . Presently we heard, as it seemed, human voices singing in the distance, in so low a tone as to be scarcely distinguishable; the sounds gradually increased, each part relatively, until it appeared as if a full choir of human voices were in our small room singing most exquisitely. I think I never heard such perfect harmony—so captivating was it that the heart-strings seemed to relax or to increase their tension to accord with such heavenly sounds. It seemed to me that no person could sit in that sanctuary without feeling the song of "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and goodwill to all men" spontaneously rising in the bosom and finding expression on the lip.

[Coleman, 1861, pp. 49–50]

Another example from the medium Mary J. Hollis:—

As soon as the room was darkened, 'the birds began to sing!' I never heard such singing—the many voices blending in perfect harmony, clear, loud, musical, and bewitching. It was a love-feast of celestial melody, which we, one and all, enjoyed to the full capacity of our appreciation. This charming concert continued about twenty minutes, unassisted by a human voice, until it suddenly ceased, and Mrs Hollis seemed to be surrounded by a multitude of spirit-voices, speaking quickly, confusedly, and in an undertone . . . A spirit-voice began to chant a part of the Episcopal service, and then improvised a rhapsody that was indescribably sweet and beautiful. This musical manifestation continued for about ten minutes.

[Wolfe, 1874, p. 292]

An example from a medium in London, Mrs Everitt:—

The sitting was terminated by the singing of a hymn by three or four soft, gentle voices, purporting to be 'direct' voices, which sounded as if they proceeded from the top of the room close to the ceiling. They were certainly not the voices of any of the company present. It was one of the most beautiful and touching manifestations I ever experienced.

[Benett, 1907, pp. 34–35]

Similar reports are found in the German literature on mediumship, such as in *The Paranormal* by Countess Nora Wydenbruck (W. Peter Mulacz, personal communication).

Singing or music is heard on rare occasions by patients shortly before they die, along with experiences of visions (Hyslop, 1918). Allow the author to report a case experienced by a retired acquaintance who had held a high administrative office at the University of Iceland and had been an amateur singer all his life, singing in various choirs. This is how the case was reported by the acquaintance's wife. It occurred early in 2011. Is this a case of deathbed hearing?

One morning when I woke up he told me that he had heard such extraordinarily beautiful singing. I woke up around seven in the morning and he asked me, "Did you hear this beautiful singing?" Because of this strange question I wondered if he was confused, although there was no other sign of it and had not been any earlier. I understood this happened just as he was waking up, perhaps in a dream. "Such beautiful

magnificent singing," he said. He had never heard such beautiful singing in his life. He was singing and many people around listening. I thought there might have been a choir. I went to the kitchen to make coffee. Then we sat up in bed reading. He appeared in good health but three to four hours later he unexpectedly collapsed and died instantly.

Had some unconscious part of him become aware of impending death? Or were 'some forces on the other side' already approaching him, which would mean that they were aware of his impending death. Or is there perhaps a mundane explanation like two unrelated events occurring together by chance? It is interesting to speculate about this. His wife does not share the last interpretation and found his experience a very meaningful event. The Italian psychical researcher Ernesto Bozzano (1943/1982) wrote a book about the subject and called the phenomena 'musica trascendentale'. Scott Rogo (1970, 1972) also wrote an interesting two-volume book on what he termed 'psychic music'.

INDRIDI'S FOREIGN CONTROLS: THE NORWEGIAN DOCTOR

Let us now turn to the second foreign control of Indridason, the 'Norwegian doctor'. He is first mentioned in the Minutes that are available to us on 23rd January 1906. He "speaks much in a distinct Norwegian", and "several characteristics of the Norwegian language were very striking in his speech". He was involved in healing attempts that are described vaguely and are impossible to assess. In the Minutes from 1907 to 1908 he appears at most sittings. Not much is written about what he said, apart from his sometimes asking about the health of various persons. Along with Jensen, he was involved in the production of materialisations and light phenomena. Kvaran (1906) writes about him:—

We could not get him to say who he was. Then it so happened at a healing session in a private home that Konrad Gislason, apparently inadvertently, mentioned his name. He quickly started to speak about something else as if to cover his mistake. Only one person noticed the name . . . At another séance in the Experimental House a patient lay on a bench in front of the cabinet in the smaller hall while the medium was in the main hall in a trance. Then the patient said: "Now I know the name of the Norwegian doctor." He heard him called from the cabinet (which was empty) . . . He and the man who had heard the name earlier compared their notes; it was the same name. The Norwegian doctor then called one of them into the cabinet and admitted to the name but asked that it not be revealed. He then related a few events from his life. It has all proved correct. The medium has often seen the doctor in a waking state as with many of the invisible guests that he is in touch with. He says he knows what they look like just as well as the persons who are daily around him . . . Of this doctor there exists only one photograph in this city as far as I know and it is impossible that it could have got into Indridi's hands.

Brynjolfur Thorlaksson says that this happened in the office of Björn Jonsson. Björn was leafing through a book when Indridi dropped in. In the book was this photograph. As soon as he saw the photo, Indridi said, "This is the Norwegian doctor."

This person's name was Daniel Cornelius Danielssen, born 1815 in Bergen and dying there in 1894. He became head of a leprosy hospital, and among other achievements made pioneering discoveries in the treatment of leprosy, initiated the establishment of a scientific academy, and founded a national

theatre in Bergen. He was prominent in Norway in his time, a member of the city council for 38 years and in the Norwegian parliament for several periods. He was made a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (Norway and Sweden were in union at that time).

The appearances of the French singer and of Danielssen raise the question of whether xenoglossy took place at Indridi's séances. The evidence for it is there, in the Minute Books and in other sources. Was there also clearly some xenoglossy of the responsive type, namely when the control not only spoke in a foreign language but also responded to questions in that language? Apparently yes for the French singer. But the descriptions of the Norwegian leave something to be desired. For him any detailed evidence for responsive xenoglossy is missing.

Jensen was the third control who spoke in a foreign language, in his case in Danish. Nielsson writes about Jensen's speech:—

As you will certainly understand, Jensen had great difficulty as he had to speak through the medium in a foreign language. The medium had never learnt any other language than Icelandic . . . but Jensen succeeded remarkably well and although the words sometimes came through a bit distorted from the lips of the medium, it often sounded like the best Copenhagen dialect. [Nielsson, 1922a, pp. 14–15]

EDVARD GRIEG

Now more on xenoglossy and 'outside' singing by a communicator who was not a control. The famous Norwegian composer, Edvard Grieg (born 1843, died 4th September 1907), appeared several times according to the Minute Books. On 14th September 1907, ten days after Grieg's death, Konrad Gislason says that Grieg is present and asks the Icelandic composer Sveinbjörn Sveinbjörns-son to play a lullaby for him, which he does. In some ways Sveinbjörn is similar to Grieg though he did not attain such fame as Grieg did. They were contemporaries, but Sveinbjörn lived on for twenty years after Grieg died. They never met but had at least one mutual friend: the Norwegian composer, Johan Svendsen (with whom Sveinbjörn once played music), so Grieg must have known about Sveinbjörn. In their compositions both turned increasingly to their respective national heritage of folk music and melodies in their lyrical pieces.

Later the same evening Grieg speaks through the medium and talks for a quarter of an hour with Brynjolfur Thorlaksson (the organist) and relates that, among other things he had learnt after he 'returned home' (died), Nordraak (who composed the Norwegian national anthem) had inspired him. He sings a melody, *Nu løftes laft og lofte*, through the medium. Jon Mannsåker of Norway informs me (personal communication) that "this song is in fact a lullaby (*vuggevis*) written by Henrik Ibsen in his historical play *Kongsemnerne*. . . . Edvard Grieg composed the melody for this in 1866, the first text by Ibsen for which he composed music. It is considered one of the best lyrical pieces by Grieg, and was composed after the birth of his only child, Alexandra. So it is reasonable to see this song as very dear to Grieg."

At the next séance Grieg appears again, speaks a few words and thanks Brynjolfur for last time. On 25th January 1908 he appears and says he had always been interested in Icelanders. This seems reasonably likely, for there

were traditionally strong cultural ties between Norway and Iceland, and both countries were struggling at this time to achieve national autonomy within the unions with Sweden and Denmark respectively.

Grieg is known to have spent three years in Copenhagen, where he must have met some Icelanders. Grieg as well as Sveinbjörn studied music in Copenhagen and Leipzig but Grieg a few years before Sveinbjörn. On 5th February he appears again and speaks of two well-known Icelanders he knew in Copenhagen. He asks one sitter (a good singer) to sing for him a certain Icelandic song (*Thu blafjallageimur*), which he does. The sitters then hear two voices singing low 'outside', which they believe to be Grieg and Steinn Steinsen. Brynjolfur refers to this and more incidents with Grieg in his memoirs (Thordarson, 1942, pp 86–87):—

I became acquainted with the personality who said he was Edvard Grieg once when I sat with Indridi after a séance and while he was waking up, which always took a long time. Someone always stayed with him until he was fully awake, for the sitters left at the end of the séance. This was often left to me and I was not allowed to put on a light until he was awake.

On one occasion the control says to me: "a man is there that you would like to meet". The control leaves and through the medium there speaks an unknown voice in Danish with a Norwegian accent: "God aften, jeg er Edvard Grieg" ("Good evening, I am Edvard Grieg"). I reply that it is an unexpected pleasure to speak to Edvard Grieg. We talk for a while back and forth. Among the things we spoke about was the Norwegian composer Nordraak, who composed the Norwegian anthem.

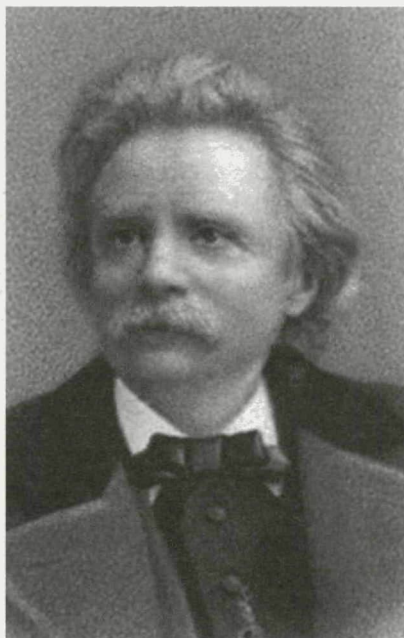
"He was rather young when he died," I said.

"Yes, he did not live long," Grieg replies in Norwegian, "he was only 24 years old. I know now that he often inspired me after he went over to the other side."

This, I felt, was strange, for I did not know how old Nordraak had been when he died. And as far as I could gather Indridi did not even know that Nordraak had ever existed; still less that he died at the age of 24.

Brynjolfur reports another incident involving Grieg. Once he was alone with Indridi in his apartment, playing the organ while Indridi hummed the melodies. He knew that direct writing sometimes took place. While Indridi was sitting in the living room, he decided to place on a table in Indridi's adjacent bedroom a piece of paper he had torn out of his pocket book. He put a pencil on top of it and went back to the room where Indridi was sitting.

We listen and after a short while we hear the pencil fall on the table. I go into the



The Norwegian composer Edvard Grieg (1843–1907) is reported in the Minutes to have appeared at Indridason's seances a few days after his death.

bedroom to fetch the paper and the pencil. On the paper had been written: "Edvard Grieg".

I had never seen Grieg's handwriting so now I was very curious to know whether it looked like what was written on my paper. Somewhere—I do not remember where—I succeeded in digging up Grieg's signature. It was exactly the same writing as on the paper I had torn out of my pocket book. [Thordarson, 1942, p. 84]

On this same occasion when he was playing on the organ, he heard the French singer sing in a low voice outside Indridi, who was not in trance. Brynjolfur then tore another page from his pocket book, placed it on the table in Indridi's bedroom, where no lamp was lit, and went back to Indridi in the living room. Then both of them listened until they heard a sound as of the pencil falling on the paper. Brynjolfur went into the room and saw that the pencil was no longer on the paper where he had left it, but beside the paper. On it was written "Singa sola mina vina" (broken Norwegian/Danish/Icelandic which might mean "Sing alone, my friend", or "I sing alone for my friends"). The handwriting was large and beautiful with upright (not leaning) letters. In Bushnell's biography is an example of Madame Malibran's handwriting; it is apparently large but not straight, it is rather leaning and it does not fit Brynjolfur's description. Brynjolfur recalls:—

At the next meeting of the inner circle Einar Kvaran, Haraldur Nielsson and I were talking about what had been written on one of the papers in Indridi's bedroom. Then one of them said that if Madame Malibran has written this on the paper, it seems that some Scandinavian has helped her, for this resembles Scandinavian languages. Then from outside the medium comes a reply, and we recognised the voice of Grieg, for he had often been at our meetings before: "Det var mig" ("It was me").

[Thordarson, 1942, 84–85]

Neither in the Minute Books nor in Brynjolfur's memoirs are any statements included that Grieg made about his life which could be checked, and the piece of handwriting has been lost. The quality of Grieg's Norwegian is not mentioned, but it can probably be assumed that it was correct, as educated Icelanders such as Haraldur Nielsson, Einar Kvaran and Brynjolfur Thorlaks-son certainly knew the sound of Norwegian very well, for all of them had received some of their education in Copenhagen, where there were also many Norwegian students. Norwegian and Danish are highly related, the spelling at that time was very similar, but the pronunciation was very different. Hence we may have here another case of xenoglossy, and, according to the witness reports, it seems reasonable to assume that it was of the responsive type.

A few other communicators who spoke foreign languages appeared at the séances. A Dutchman is mentioned a few times. He was asked if he spoke German: "No, only Dutch" is somehow made clear to them. The Minute Books mention at least two who spoke English (John King and Hall), but not much is written about them, only a few short sentences. The medium described John King as a very large man with a powerful voice. He spoke 'outside' at three séances at least. The recorder assumed that John King was English. A control by the name of John King is mentioned in the mediumship of Jonathan Koons (see above) and Eusapia Palladino; in fact, according to Berger (1991, pp. 225–226), "almost every nineteenth-century medium seems to have had a John King control. . . . In the 1920s and 1930s John King was still around helping Gladys Osborne and Etta Wriedt." Berger adds that "spiritualists theorized

that 'John King' was either a pseudonym for a group of controls or was a 'symbol of power'."

JENSEN AND THE LIGHT PHENOMENA

We have so far discussed 'transcendental' music, direct speech and xenoglossy. Another striking feature of Indridason's mediumship was light phenomena. After Jensen's first appearance on 24th November 1905 he appeared frequently and he played an important role in Indridi's mediumship, being primarily involved in attempts to produce materialisations and light phenomena. Nielsson writes (1922b, pp. 456-457):-

The materialisation experiments required much patience both from operators and sitters. Finally at Christmas time 1906 they began to come to sight. We sat with the medium in a fairly large room, adjoining a small bedroom, which we were told the controls required for their own use. Shortly before Christmas the bedroom began to be filled with a very strong white light, and in this light we saw a being that purported to be the discarnate Mr. Jensen.

He appeared first between the curtains and shouted with a typical Copenhagen accent: "Ka De se mig?" ["Can you see me?"] In the beginning of the next year he showed himself in the larger room where the medium was sitting among us — do remember — always in trance. The new guest was clothed in an extremely fine white drapery, which in many folds reached to the floor, *the light radiating from him*. We saw him at different places in the room. Sometimes he stood close to some of us. Once he was standing on the sofa with a red light like a sun behind him, with white light streaming out from it. I shall never forget the wonderful spectacle. Frequently he succeeded in showing himself seven to eight times each evening in a different part of the room. Several times we saw both the medium and the materialised form simultaneously.

In the Minute Book from 4th December 1905 to 6th January 1906 Jensen appears several times, also in the Minutes from 1907-1908. This is usually in association with light phenomena. As the author has already reported, Jensen would appear in a 'pillar of light'. Never was anything observed oozing from Indridi's orifices. No mention is made of the ectoplasm observed with some mediums that became famous for materializations.

SIGMUNDUR GUDMUNDSSON'S LIST OF MEMORIES VERIFIED BY HIS WIDOW

At the end of the first Minute Book is an undated detailed list of 41 memories ostensibly from Sigmundur Gudmundsson, who had been a farmer and a skilled smith of iron and wood. He died of exposure in the wild in 1897. He appeared at most of the séances recorded in the two Minute Books, almost as frequently as Kondrad Gislason, the main control and the brother of Indridi's grandfather. Sigmundur gave information about things he had owned or made, and events in his life. They were recorded in the Minutes and later his widow, Gudny, was asked if she remembered these items. Each item is described and on a separate page her response is recorded. If she knew the items, she was in some instances asked to show them. The author checked the list. Gudny remembered or knew 25 of the 41 items. Six she partially verified, five she could not know or was not sure about, and five items she rejected and thought they were wrong. On the whole this still seems rather impressive, given that the reported memories were very specific.

There are many examples of this kind of testing of memories, but the case of Sigmundur Gudmundsson is described in more detail than any other. Regarding other persons, the stating of the inquiries that may have followed is sometimes neglected, or perhaps such inquiries never took place. Now, over a century later, no inquiries can be made about any of these cases.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE ARM

In the Minutes for 19th December 1905 we read about a 'dematerialisation' of Indridi's left arm that was examined by Kvaran. He touches the shoulder and does not find the arm. The following evening the same thing happened and five sitters touched him around the shoulder and were unable to find his arm. It was missing. One of those who examined his shoulder was a physician, Hinrik Erlendsson. A light was on for some of this time. Kvaran (1906, p.32) examined the medium the second time, "shoulder down along his side and the same on his front". Five persons are mentioned who searched for the arm.

At the beginning of the séance sitters were asked to help him take some clothes off; it is not specified which, probably his jacket and vest. Nor is it described how Indridi was dressed except that the sleeve was seen hanging loose and they were not allowed to take the shirt off. During the disappearance of the arm one sitter reports that his face is touched by a hand. The controls say they amputated the arm. One sitter, Björn Jonsson, was invited to examine whether he could find any blood where the arm was missing, which he did not. Then the controls spoke of fixing his arm back to his body. The medium moaned in pain, woke up and the 'experiment' was over. For further details see accounts by Kvaran (1906) and Nielsson (1922b). What they do not mention but is found in the protocol is the presence of the physician and his examination.

The disappearance/dematerialisation of the arm happened again and then seven people searched and could not find it. Thorlaksson was one of them. He reported that "the medium stood on the floor and I stroked with my hand from the shoulder down the side, down the back and the chest. Also touched all around his body both high up and low on his torso" (Thordarson, 1942, p.22). He continued:—

I find it ridiculous to think that I would not have felt the arm with such a thorough search, if the arm had been there, unless I have at this moment been put into some hypnotic state that caused a gross misperception. The other six witnesses must then also have been placed in the same state of misperception for we all signed that we made this observation and were willing to confirm it under oath.

Disappearance of bodily parts of the medium is very rare in the history of mediumship. Best known is probably Aksakow's (1894) account of the disappearance of the legs of the medium d'Esperance. That observation later came under some criticism by Hereward Carrington, who was an experienced psychical researcher and magician and is famous for his investigation of the Italian medium, Eusapio Palladino.

Perhaps related to this are reports of apport phenomena, which consist of the disappearance of objects and their reappearance at séances. Nielsson (1922a) and Brynjolfur Thorlaksson (Thordarson, 1942) describe such phenomena, and they are reviewed by Gissurarson and Haraldsson (1989).

MONSTER-LIKE ANIMAL

Brynjolfur Thorlaksson and Indridi were both interested in horses and loved to ride. Brynjolfur had a horse and agreed with Indridi that he could ride his horse as much as he liked if he was willing to take care of it. The horse was kept in a stable on the outskirts of Reykjavik, which was then a very small town. Below is a slightly shortened account by Brynjolfur of a deformed creature that followed them one bright summer night.

One evening Indridi ran into Brynjolfur by chance as he was on his way home from feeding the horse. They walked together towards Indridi's house. Suddenly they heard hoof-clatter as if a young horse was about 50 metres behind them. They looked behind and saw following them a creature of the size of a young horse of about one to four years old. It looked like a young horse but at the same time like a calf—and yet it was neither or both. It looked like a deformed creature, a mixture of horse and calf. The head was a combination of both animals. The creature had shorter legs than a young horse normally has, but its step sounded like that from horses' hoofs. It had a tail but not like a horse. It had a lot of hair but not a horse's mane. The animal was dark and ugly. Brynjolfur and Indridi felt very uncomfortable as they saw this creature lumbering behind them, especially as it was middle in the night and they were alone in the street.

They hurried to Indridi's home, where the séances were held. As they were about to enter the house Brynjolfur looked back and saw the creature right behind them. It lifted its head and looked at them. There was a ladder standing leaning against the northern wall of the house. Then as they entered the house three things happened at once: Indridi immediately fell into trance; the ladder levitated and fell to the ground away from the house; and the monster disappeared. That the ladder fell in this direction was against the law of gravity; it looked as if the ladder had been thrown at the monster.

Indridi's control reported that there was nothing to be afraid of; he would see to that. Brynjolfur asked what it was all about. The reply was that he would be told later. Then Indridi woke up from his trance and Brynjolfur walked back to his own home.

A séance was held shortly afterwards for the inner circle and Indridi fell into trance. Then they heard the clatter of horse-hoofs and felt the creeps going through them. They heard a peep or a whistle as when steam is released from a steam engine. Then the sound of horses' hoofs stopped. The controls said that this was a case of a man who had hanged himself in a horse's stable and after his death was able in some way to use material from animals to make contact with the physical world.

At later séances the sitters heard these hoof-beats a few times and they were always followed by this whistling peeping sound. The controls said this was because they were dematerialising the monster. The monster seemed to have no evil intentions; it just wanted to join them, but neither the sitters nor the controls wanted that. After a few séances this disappeared completely.

[Thordarson, 1942, pp. 92–96]

Thordarson, who took down the memoirs of Brynjolfur Thorlaksson, attempted to verify some of Brynjolfur's memories by interviewing other witnesses. Thorkell, Brynjolfur's brother, remembered his brother telling him about this incident shortly after it occurred. He also recalls having heard the hoof-beat and the whizz sound at some séances.

Materialisations or appearances of animals are rare in the history of mediumship and spiritism. Best known is probably the case of the eagle in the mediumship of the Polish medium Franek Kluski and of an 'apeman' and dog in the case of Jean Guzik. They were investigated by Gustav Geley and others.

Kluski became famous for paraffin moulds of hands that were produced in experiments.

THE THREE CLASSES OF COMMUNICATORS

In his great classic, *Human Personality, and its Survival of Bodily Death*, Myers (1903, II, pp.226–227) divides communicators into three classes:—

- A) A group of persons recently deceased.
- B) A group of personages belonging to generations more remote, and generally of some distinction in their day.
- C) Spirits who give such names as Rector, Doctor, Theophilus and above all Imperator. Their constantly avowed object was the promulgation . . . of certain religious and philosophical views; and throughout the physical manifestations are described merely as a proof of power, and a basis for the authority claimed for the serious teachings.

In Indridi's mediumship the communicators fall rather easily into these three categories, particularly A and B. Class C, the active controls, do not bear such grandiose names as found with some English-speaking mediums. Their identity, for some only reluctantly and partly revealed, is not as easily or convincingly verified as for class A.

People who died violently are also a prominent group. It is interesting that at least two persons who had died violently figure prominently in Indridi's mediumship. They are the disturbing Jon from the Westman Islands, who committed suicide, and Sigmundur, who died of exposure. Perhaps the French singer can also be added to this list, for she died at the young age of 28 shortly after falling from horseback, and was thus torn away from a brilliant career at an early and untimely age. Those who died violently also featured rather prominently in the mediumship of Mrs Piper, and this was again the case in the mediumship of Hafsteinn Björnsson (Haraldsson, 2009). A recent survey of personal encounters with the dead (Haraldsson, 2009, 2012) showed that in spontaneous apparitional experiences those who had died violently appeared much more frequently (30%) than violent deaths occur in the population (9%). Memories of violent death figure in over two-thirds of the cases of children who claim to remember a previous life.

DESCRIPTIONS OF LIFE IN THE OTHER REALM

It may be of interest to some readers to know what the entities that appeared at Indridi's séances said about life in their realm of existence. In the two Minute Books we find an occasional mention of that. One particular instance related to the Jensen case: on 4th January 1906 Jensen was asked if he had been in Copenhagen again. "No," he replied, "I have not been there for two weeks. I have been in the great hall that we use in heaven."

In the period when Hannesson attended the séances there seem to have been more such descriptions. He summarized the information as follows:—

Probably many are curious to know what these deceased people—as they claimed to be—said about their existence in the other world. I cannot see that it is to any purpose to go minutely into that matter as long as there is no certainty that their statements are to be depended upon. In most respects they described their existence in a manner that would seem to be quite acceptable to Christian people. They lived, retained their

personality, and their happiness was according to their deserts and differed a great deal in each individual case. They said their memories of life here, their love for their friends and relatives, etc., survived. On the other hand there was much that clashed with the teaching of the church.

Death . . . means little change, very similar—if not exactly the like—going from one room into another. There was neither heaven nor hell . . . nor did men change into devils or angels . . . each one would simply reap as he had sown. Perfection had to evolve slowly from within, through experience. [Hannesson, 1924b, p.268]

THE LAST DAYS OF INDRIDI

Indridi died of tuberculosis on 31st August 1912. In his funeral tribute Haraldur Nielsson said:—

He [Indridi] admired their [his controls'] loyalty and goodness to him to the end. He said he still was aware of his friends, not least as he came closer to death. And last when I visited him at the Vifilstadir sanatorium he mentioned to me that he was astonished by their loyalty, and that they never left him.

Einar Kvaran (1912) wrote in his obituary of Indridi:—

For a few years he was one of the most spoken-about men in the country. In his special field he was undoubtedly one of the most remarkable men in the world . . . I last visited Indridi the day before he died.

. . . I asked him if he was ever aware of his friends from the other side. "Yes often," he replied, "every time I get drowsy I become aware of them." Was he ever aware of them when he was awake? "Yes, I also see them then, particularly when it begins to get dark."

This was his last statement as he was facing death. We spoke some more about this. His certainty about *their* existence was as sure as of mine.

COMMENTS ON AND CRITICISMS OF INDRIDI'S MEDIUMSHIP

The loudest criticism that was directed at Indridi Indridason's mediumship came from religious groups and persons who never attended a séance. They accused Indridi and those around him of resurrecting old superstitions and of conjuring up the dead, and they saw devils behind the phenomena. No comments are needed on that.

Brynjolfur mentions in his memoirs that Indridi was a great imitator and that this was sometimes used against him by people accusing him of conscious or unconscious ventriloquism. This might explain the voices of people Indridi had known, but some—probably many—of the communicators were personalities he had never met. Hence this can only be a potential explanation for some of voices that were heard and recognised by sitters. On the other hand, one can speculate as to whether his ability to imitate and sing in fact made it easier for the forces that acted upon him to get the responses desired.

Besides, a considerable part of the speaking was direct, namely not coming from the medium's throat but from the space somewhere around him, sometimes some distance away, like a whisper in someone's ear while the medium was held in another part of the room. Sometimes there were two voices outside him who spoke with one another or at the same time. All of this is hard to explain by imitation. Hannesson (1924b, pp.266–267) wrote that some persons reported hearing two voices speak at the same time:—

They declared that this had happened, and I think it inconceivable that anybody

should by ventriloquistic means be able speak in two voices at a time. I never heard this and therefore was so bold as to doubt the story.

However, at least there happened one thing which greatly surprised me, and which decidedly seemed to clash with the theory of ventriloquism. It was a frequent occurrence to hear the voices sing, sometimes short and faintly, sometimes loudly and whole melodies. At least twice I *heard two voices sing the same tune together* as plainly and distinctly as one could wish. One was a sonorous voice of a woman, the other a trembling bass voice of a man. Both these voices came from the inner quarter where, as far as I know, nobody was there but the medium, and the distance between them (the voices) was at least eight to ten feet. This observation was too distinct to leave any possibility for doubt . . .

Since I have spoken of the singing I may mention that it was frequently the product of genuine art and gave the indubitable evidence of trained and skilful singers. A member of the Society, one of its best judges of music, told me that in his view the best proof of the genuineness of the phenomena was that nobody in the house could sing with such perfection as the voices sometimes evinced.

The movements and levitations of objects and of Indridi himself might be divided into two parts, the first being those occurring in the darkness of the séance room. Hannesson was allowed to impose all the controls he wanted, apart from putting on a light except momentarily and usually with permission. He isolated the medium, and one or two persons who were holding the medium, from the sitters by fastening a tightly-knit net across the hall with only one small hole, which he guarded himself (for details see Gissurarson & Haraldsson, 1989). In spite of this the movements continued. He placed phosphorescent spots on some objects and they could then be seen flying around the room, often in irregular movements. The ever-vigorously-suspicious Hannesson wrote (1924b, pp.260–261):—

I continued to attend séances of the Society for a whole winter, and there was hardly one at which I did not try to detect fraud in one way or another. At almost every séance I noticed something which I considered suspicious, sometimes very suspicious, and at the next one I used to be especially vigilant on that particular point. But in spite of all I was never able to ascertain any fraud. On the other hand the bulk of the phenomena were, as far as I could judge, quite genuine, whatever their cause may have been. A great many things I had no means of investigating, and so can pass no judgement as to whether they were genuine or not.

There was particularly one species of these wonders which I did all I could to investigate, viz., the unaccountable movements of inanimate objects, apparently independent of any living being . . .

I am acquainted with various tricks used by jugglers for imitating the phenomena. The movements were often of such a nature that to do them fraudulently would have been exceedingly difficult, e.g. taking a zither, swinging it in the air at an enormous speed, at the same time playing a tune on it. This was however frequently done while I was holding the hands of both the medium and the watchman and there seemed no way for anybody to get inside the net. Sometimes the moving required such force that nothing could explain unless there was an able-bodied man in the inner quarter working at his convenience. But against this explanation there were two objections: (1) that there seemed to be no way open into the place, and (2) that a light was often lit so suddenly that such an assistant would have had no time for escaping.

During the poltergeist period some of the phenomena occurred in full light and were witnessed by more than one sitter. Such was the case, for example, when two persons who were guarding Indridi saw that he had been lifted into

mid-air above his bed and seemed about to be thrown out through a window. With considerable effort Indridi's protectors managed to drag him down onto his bed. On this evening he was also dragged along the floor as if by invisible hands. The disturbing spirit of 'Jon' from the Westman Islands was assumed to be behind these violent movements and the throwing and breaking of objects.

Kvaran (1906) writes that the rumour spread through Reykjavik that Indridi used a certain type of lamp to produce the light phenomena. Kvaran gave a two-fold answer to this criticism. This lamp could not give a variety of different colours and light of varying brightness. Secondly, Indridi lived at his home at this time and his wife and he knew what belongings he had with him. Never did he give any suggestion that there were any lamps or other suspicious equipment in his possession.

With good reason perhaps, one tends to be particularly suspicious when famous or historical personages appear at séances. There is some of that with Indridi. The case of Grieg is one, although his appearance may be understandable in view of his very probably having known some Icelanders from a few years' stay in Copenhagen. Also through the fact that so much singing and music took place at Indridi's séances, and the presence of the musician, Brynjolfur Thorlaksson, and the composer, Sveinbjörn Sveinbjörnsson.

Much more remote are the appearances of Kjartan Olafsson and Gudrun Osvifursdottir. They are leading figures in a famous saga written in the 13th century and they are mentioned once or twice in the Minutes as communicators. Several times the nationally famous religious poet Hallgrimur Petursson (1614–1674), who wrote a psalm that is still sung at almost every funeral in Iceland, appeared. Jörgen Jörgenson (1780–1841) can perhaps be placed in that category. He was a Danish adventurer who, as a commander on a British warship, captured Iceland and declared it independent during the Napoleonic wars. The British Navy soon picked him up and sentenced him to be transported to Australia for life. None of these persons revealed anything new or unexpected about their lives. Nothing like what we have in the remarkable case of Emil Jensen, whose identity was discovered and 'proved beyond reasonable doubt'.

EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL IN INDRIDI INDRIDASON'S MEDIUMSHIP

It seems beyond any reasonable doubt that paranormal phenomena took place in the mediumship of Indridi Indridason; moreover, an exceptional variety of them. Forces were at work that are inexplicable by modern science and contradict some of the basic limiting principles (Broad, 1969). The inevitable question follows, what was the source of these paranormal phenomena, forces, abilities and manifestations? Did they originate solely and exclusively in the medium, or were they beyond him and working through him? This is the old question of an animistic or spiritualistic interpretation. The spiritualistic interpretation bears in it the consequence that there is life after death and another realm of existence.

Myers wrote in his *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death* that "the question of man's survival of death stands in a position uniquely intermediate between matters capable and matters incapable of proof" (1903, II, p. 79). Another prominent researcher, Stevenson (1982, 2001), has argued in

a circumspect way that certain phenomena found in apparitions, mediumship and reincarnation cases may offer evidence for survival. Keeping the views of Myers as well as Stevenson in mind, let us examine, with due caution, some relevant features in the mental phenomena of Indridi's mediumship, and ask what their meaning for the survival question might be.

Information or facts are sometimes revealed that are unknown to the medium. An example of this is the case of Sigmundur, who described many events in his life that were later verified by his wife. This may be relevant for the question of survival, but it may not, because it could be explained by assuming that Indridi was endowed with a great psychic gift.

Motivational factors. Can they be explained by psi? That seems less certain, for motivation is not an act of acquiring information. In the 'fire in Copenhagen case' (Haraldsson, 2011), Jensen had a motivation to follow the fire in his home area in Copenhagen, whereas that fire should not have interested Indridi more than fires anywhere else. Hence, this case may offer some evidence for the reality or genuineness of the communicator Emil Jensen.

Personalisation means psychological and personal characteristics, manner of speech, choice of words, way of thinking, and consistency of behaviour over time of the communicating entity. There is considerable evidence for this in Indridi's mediumship. The Revd Steinn Steinsen and other communicators were recognized and accepted by many sitters as genuine by persons who had known them when they were alive, and for the reason that they exhibited the personal characteristics (personality and memory) that they had when they were alive. This more than anything else led Nielsson (1922a) to conclude that the communicating entities were real persons who had survived death.

Skills that neither the medium nor anyone else present at the sittings, and indeed no one in the whole country, possessed were sometimes displayed. The case in point is the extraordinary professional singing that took place, sometimes by a female and a male voice at the same time. No opera singers were living in Iceland at the time of these sittings.

Xenoglossy. Good evidence is found in Indridi's mediumship for speaking in languages not known by the medium. Like some of the singing, speaking in these foreign languages was beyond Indridi's capacity. This indicates an independence of the communicating entities from the person of Indridi and may be interpreted as an evidence of their genuineness.

This brief overview shows that in the mediumship of Indridi Indridason there is not only strong evidence for paranormal physical phenomena, but in addition we find an exceptional number of different phenomena that have been interpreted as pointing towards human survival of bodily death, as Myers phrased it. The manifestation of these phenomena may indicate the existence of another realm of reality of which we rarely have a glimpse. Seen that way, Indridi was a middleman (as he was called in Icelandic) or an interface of rare quality between the two realms.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For various assistance and useful suggestions thanks go to Loftur Reimar Gissurarson, Halldor Haraldsson, Jon Mannsáker, Jesper Vaczy Kragh, Guy Playfair and Carlos Alvarado.

Department of Psychology
University of Iceland
101 Reykjavik, ICELAND

Erlendur@hi.is

REFERENCES

- Benett, E. T. (1907) *The Physical Phenomena Popularly Classed under the Head of Spiritualism*. New York: Brentano.
- Berger, A. S. and Berger, J. (1991) *The Encyclopedia of Parapsychology and Psychical Research*. New York: Paragon House.
- Bozzano, E. (1982) *Musica Trascendentale*. Rome: Edizione Mediterranee. [1943, first revised edition]
- Broad, C. D. (1969) *Religion, Philosophy and Psychical Research*. New York: Humanities Press.
- Bushnell, H. (1979) *Maria Malibran: A Biography of a Singer*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Coleman, B. (1861) *Spiritualism in America*. London: F. Pitman.
- Dunraven, Earl of (1924) Experiences in spiritualism with D. D. Home. *Proc SPR* 35, 1–285.
- Gissurarson, L. R. and Haraldsson, E. (1989) The Icelandic physical medium Indridi Indridason. *Proc SPR* 57, 53–148.
- Hannesson, G. (1924a) Tveir fundir i Tilraunafelaginu. [Two meetings of the Experimental Society]. *Morgunn* 5, 217–226.
- Hannesson, G. (1924b) Remarkable phenomena in Iceland. *JASPR* 18, 239–272. [Translation of articles published in *Nordurland* 1910–1911]
- Haraldsson, E. (2009) Alleged encounters with the dead. The importance of violent death in 337 new cases. *JP* 73, 91–118.
- Haraldsson, E. (2011) A Perfect Case? Emil Jensen in the mediumship of Indridi Indridason. The fire in Copenhagen on November 24th 1905 and the discovery of Jensen's identity. *Proc SPR* 59 (223), 195–223.
- Haraldsson, E. (2012) *Departed Among the Living: An Investigative Study of Afterlife Encounters*. UK & USA: White Crow Books.
- Hyslop, J. H. (1918) Visions of the Dying. *JASPR* 12, 585–645.
- Kvaran, E. H. (1906) *Dularfull fyrirbrigdi er borid hafa fyrir Tilraunafelagsmenn i Reykjavik 1904–1906*. [Mysterious phenomena occurring to members of the Experimental Society in Reykjavik, 1904–1906]. Reykjavik: Isafoldarprentsmidja.
- Kvaran, E. H. (1912) Indridi Indridason. *Isafold* 39 (25th September).
- Kvaran, E. H. (1934) Frá landamærunum. Einar Kvaran segir frá upphafi sálarrannsóknna hér á landi. *Morgunbladið* 6 (December).
- Myers, F. W. H. (1903) *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death* (two volumes). London: Longmans, Green & Co.
- Nielsson, H. (1922a) *Kirken og Psykisk Forskning* [The Church and Psychical Research]. Copenhagen: Levin og Munksgaard.
- Nielsson, H. (1922b) Some of my experiences with a physical medium in Iceland. In Vett, C. (ed.) *Le compte rendu officiel du premier congres international des recherches psychiques a Copenhague*, 450–465. Copenhagen.

- Nielsson, H. (1924) Poltergeist phenomena in connection with a medium observed for a length of time, some of them in full light. In *L'État Actuel des Recherches Psychiques d'après les travaux du II^{me} Congrès International tenu à Varsovie en 1923 en l'honneur du Dr. Julien Ochorowicz*, 148–168. Paris: Les Presses Universitaires de France. [Reprinted in *Psychic Science* 1925, 4.]
- Randall, E. C. (2010) *Frontiers of the Afterlife*. UK & USA: White Crow Books. [First published in 1922]
- Rogo, D. S. (1970) *NAD: A Psychic Study of Some Unusual 'Other-World' Experiences*. New York: University Books.
- Rogo, D. S. (1972) *A Psychic Study of 'The Music of the Spheres' (NAD, Volume II)*. Secaucus, NJ: University Books.
- Stevenson, E. (1982) The contribution of apparitions to the evidence for survival. *JASPR* 76, 341–358.
- Stevenson, I. (1984) *Unlearned Language: New Studies in Xenoglossy*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia.
- Stevenson, E. (2001) *Children Who Remember Previous Lives: A Question of Reincarnation (revised edition)*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland.
- Thordarson, T. (1942) *Indridi midill: Endurminningar Brynjólfs Thorlakssonar söngkennara [Indridi the medium: Recollections of Brynjólfur Thorlaksson, organist]*. Reykjavik: Vikingsutgáfan.
- Wolfe, N. B. (1874) *Startling Facts in Modern Spiritualism*. Cincinnati, no publisher given.

Copyright of Journal of the Society for Psychical Research is the property of Society for Psychical Research and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.